



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

must be the consequences to individuals, of the mighty movements of a people.

But along with this, we see a mightier movement still. As if it were not enough for a nation to leave its ancient land and cross the world, there must be a movement as great in the very mind and soul of the nation; as if it were not enough to abandon its ancient home unless it should abandon the religion of its fathers too. The proof of the fact we gave in our last number, from the Rev. Mr. Mullen, Roman Catholic curate of Clonmellon, who thus states the result of his inquiries on the spot—"THE FAITH HAS DIED OUT IN MILLIONS." God forbid that we should trifle with such a fact, much less triumph over it. It is a solemn and a fearful fact. If the mind swells with deep emotion at the thoughts of a nation without a home, struggling across the ocean and the wilderness, how much more awful and solemn is the thought, that in religion, too, that nation is wandering more hopelessly, without an aim, and without a guide! And is it anything short of this to say—"The faith has died out in millions"?

We dare not trifle with such a fact. We dare not use it for a political purpose, as Mr. Mullen has done. We dare not use it to triumph over a church whose people have thus wandered. One thought, and one only, fills our minds in contemplating facts so great and so terrible, and that thought is, how the wandering of the Irish people in religion may be ended, so that in their pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, their souls at least may be at rest.

That fearful fact which Mr. Mullen has disclosed, is proof that there has been something wrong with the Irish people. We anxiously avoid drawing any conclusion from it that is not strictly just. Were we to treat this fact in any party or sectarian spirit, we should be unworthy to propose a remedy. We have no right to say that this great falling off of the Irish people is any proof that their religion is false. Peoples and nations have forsaken true as well as false religions. But we are bound to say, that there has been something wrong. If their religion was true, then these people were not properly taught and grounded in it. That, at least, is a conclusion we must come to. And this conclusion is confirmed by the positive testimony of an American missionary priest, who has spent twelve years among the emigrants. That testimony, too, we gave in our last number, as we found it in the *Tablet* newspaper—"It is owing, with scarcely an exception, to the want of religious instruction in which these unfortunate people were literally raised." We trust and know that this was not so with all. But we fear it was true of a vast number. The truth must be told. With a vast number, while in Ireland, the priest was their religion: they left their religion to him, and he was content to let them do so. For the religion of the heart and soul, they had not learned it; and he had not taught it to them. The priest had been himself their religion; and when left without a priest, they were without a religion; and so "the faith died out." Such a religion as this will ever fail in the time of trial. But if these men had had their religion in their hearts—if they had been taught to understand and to believe for themselves, their faith would not have failed in the day of trial, and the storms and troubles of this world would have strengthened and established it the more.

Who has not seen the self-denial and self-devotion of the very poorest of our people, in providing the necessities for those who go? Who has not seen them strip themselves to absolute destitution, to provide sea-stores for a son, or a brother, or a sister, who was about to go? And can we be indifferent to provide the bread of life, which alone can sustain their spiritual life, for those who go?

It was while we were continually revolving such thoughts in our minds, and thinking what

that sea-store should be, that would keep their faith from "dying out" upon their voyage, that we happened to take up the sermons of St. Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, that great preacher of the Catholic Church. We knew how he has spoken of the storms and the troubles of our pilgrimage on earth, and how he shows where to look for strength and comfort. We know that he preached *fourteen hundred and fifty years* ago, and that he would give us no modern disputes or cavils. And we read thus:—

"What saith he? *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly*—that is, the teaching, the doctrines, the exhortation, wherein he says that the present life is nothing, nor yet its good things; for if we consider this, we shall yield to no hardship whatever. *Let it dwell in you, he saith, richly*—not simply dwell, but with great abundance. Hearken ye, as many as are worldly, and have the charge of wife and children. Now, to you, too, he commits especially the reading of the Scriptures, and that not to be done lightly, nor in any sort of way, but with much earnestness. . . . He said not simply, let the word of Christ be in you; but what? *Dwell in you, and richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another.* . . . And tarry not for another to teach thee, for thou hast the Scriptures of God. *NO MAN CAN TEACH THEE AS THEY: for he, indeed, often concealeth much for vain glory's sake and envy.* Hearken, I entreat you, all ye that are careful for this life, and procure books that will be medicine for the soul. If ye will not any other, yet get you at least the *New Testament*, the Acts of the Apostles, the Gospels, for your constant teachers. If grief befall thee, dive into them as into a chest of medicines; take thence comfort of thy trouble, be it loss, or death, or bereavement of relations; or rather dive not into them merely, but take them wholly to thee; keep them in thy mind. *This is the cause of all evils, the not knowing the Scriptures.* We go into the battle without arms, and how should we come off safe? Well contented should we be if we can be safe with them, let alone without them." (Homily 9, on Coss. ch. 3, vs. 16, 17.)

We here ask every Christian man to consider this. If every Irish emigrant had followed this advice, would the faith have "died out in millions?" Has it not been thus, with a great multitude of emigrants, that they went into that most trying battle of life, emigration to a foreign land, *without these arms*, and so their faith "died out?"

But here we find some comfort in thinking of many of our countrymen. We know that multitudes of them had heard of the Scriptures here, and did take these arms with them. Many have gone for this very purpose, that they might freely read the Word of God. It is likely that they may have cast off many a superstition, and many a doctrine which they cannot find in Scripture; but may we not hope that they have found the medicine of their souls? Father Mullen says nothing of these. He may have counted them heretics, or he may have thought this just as bad, or worse, than if the faith had died out in them: but would St. Chrysostom, or can any Christian man think so?

This, then, is our advice to emigrants and the friends of emigrants; yet not our advice, but St. Chrysostom's. Emigrants, get yourselves Bibles, or at least the *New Testament*. Emigrants' friends, provide them with this store of medicines for the soul. Let not the faith die out in them, in the long, weary wandering that lies before them. Ask the priest for the book; if that failed, try the parson.

Oh, what a comfort, in the long, long weary days at sea, when nothing but the watery waste and cloudy sky appear, to learn to call on Him, and trust in Him, who, for our hope and comfort, has passed through every scene of trial we can know, has walked upon the troubled water, and bid the stormy waves be still, that in the tempest's loudest roar his people's cry should ever be—"We perish; save us, Lord!"

#### INDULGENCES.

We have postponed, for some time, responding to the letter of the Rev. Edward Spring upon this subject, in the hope that the Right Rev. Dr. Keane, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ross, would have relieved us from the necessity of doing so, by publishing an authoritative explanation

of the matters inquired after by Mr. Spring. As, however, we are informed that Dr. Keane has not noticed the Rev. Mr. Spring's letter, we shall endeavour to state, fully and fairly, the Roman Catholic doctrines upon this subject, with a view to eliciting a fair discussion and inquiry into their truth or error. The universal jubilee granted by the present Pope, in his encyclical letter, dated 21st November, 1851, renders the subject, at the present time, of more than usual interest to every sincere and candid inquirer after religious truth. "To convey a true idea of what is meant by the Church of Rome by the grant of an *indulgence*, it will be necessary," says Dr. Bouvier, Bishop of Mans, in his work upon the subject (which has gone through six editions, the last published in 1836), "to have a clear idea of the punishment due for sin. After the guilt and eternal punishment due for sin have been remitted, by repentance and the sufferings of Christ, there still remains a debt of *temporal* punishment due to God's justice, on account of the sin, which debt must be expiated either here or hereafter. This is laid down as an article of faith, in express terms, by the Council of Trent (Sess. 14, Can. 12), and it was on this principle that the ancient Penitential Canons were founded, imposing a penance of three, seven, ten, fifteen, or twenty years' fasting on bread and water, privations, and humiliations, to continue during a man's whole life, and *all this for one sin!* And it was never thought that such penances, or atonements, ever exceeded the measure of God's justice." Not, be it remarked, in regard to the *guilt* or *eternal* punishment due to it, both of which are admitted to be already remitted, by God's mercy, through Christ's death, on repentance or penance of the sinner, but entirely in respect of the debt of *temporal* punishment supposed to be still unexpiated, either by Christ's sufferings or the penitence of the offender. Penances of this kind, as they were imposed and enforced by the church, so of course they could be remitted and relaxed by the church; and the relaxation of such penances is called an *indulgence*, plenary or partial, as the pardon of a condemned criminal may be complete or a mere commutation of his sentence, by remitting a portion of it. This power of the church to remit sentences of penances enjoined by the Penitential Canons *in this life*, and which really existed and could be actually enforced against the offender, was assumed as extending to the next life also." The same writer, whom we have already quoted, thus lays it down, p. 12:—"Every indulgence presupposes sin; so that if a person had committed no sin he should have no need of an indulgence; and whereas, after the guilt and eternal punishment, which have been remitted by the sacrament of penance, there remains, in general, a temporal punishment, which sinners should suffer either in this life or in the next, to satisfy the Almighty and to expiate their sins, an indulgence remits part of this punishment or atonement; and indulgences do not only remit part of the temporal punishment, which the sinner should suffer in this life, but also abridge the punishment in purgatory, when a person has not entirely atoned for his sins."

We have also before us a work printed by Richard Grace and Son, 45, Capel-street, Dublin, entitled "Indulgences Granted by Sovereign Pontiffs to the Faithful, collected by a Member of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences in Rome, translated into English with permission of Superiors," in which the definition of an indulgence is thus given, page v.—"An indulgence is the remission of the temporal punishment which generally remains due to sins already forgiven in the sacrament of penance, as to the guilt and eternal punishment. This remission is made by the application of the merits and satisfactions which are contained in the treasures of the church. These treasures are the accumulations of the spiritual goods, arising from the infinite merits and satisfaction of Jesus Christ, with the superabundant merits and satisfactions of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the holy martyrs, and of the other saints, which ultimately derive their efficacy from the merits and satisfactions of Christ, who is the only mediator of redemption. These CELESTIAL TREASURES, as they are called by the Council of Trent, are committed, by the Divine bounty, to the dispensation of the church, the sacred spouse of Christ, and are the ground and matter of indulgences. They are infinite in reference to the merits of Christ, and cannot, therefore, be ever exhausted."

We believe no Roman Catholic writer will object to the foregoing statements of the nature and objects of indulgences; and our readers will at once perceive that we are not about to charge their church with the presumption (not unfrequently attributed to it by Protestants who have not carefully examined the subject) of granting to any one a licence to commit sin with impunity, by forgiving, by anticipation, sins not yet committed. An indulgence is never supposed, by any well-informed Roman Catholic, to forgive sin at all, but only to remit the punishment—the temporal, or, rather, the temporary punishment of the sin, as contradistinguished from the eternal punishment—the punishment of hell.

Indulgences, says the same Dr. Bouvier (*Abridgment*,

\* See the *Abridgment* of Bishop Bouvier's work, entitled "A Dogmatical and Practical Treatise on Indulgences, for the use of the Clergy and Laity. By a Parish Priest; page 3. Printed by John Coyne, 24, Cook-street, Dublin, 1839.

p. 13), are of different sorts—viz., plenary, partial, and jubilee.

A plenary indulgence is a relaxation of all the temporal punishment which remained to be undergone by a person who has already performed a reasonable penance. It is called plenary, being entire and without reserve.

A partial indulgence is a relaxation of part of the temporal punishment due for sin. An indulgence of forty days, or seven years, for example, remits so much of the pain of purgatory as would be remitted by the actual performance of a penance of so many days or years, according to the ancient Penitential Canons of the church.

We take the description of a jubilee from an equally authentic source.

"A jubilee signifies a plenary indulgence in its most ample form, granted at different periods by the Sovereign Pontiff, to those who, either residing in the city of Rome or visiting it, perform there the *visitations of the churches* and other prescribed works of piety, prayer, fasting, and alms deeds, with confession and communion, which are always enjoined for the giving of this indulgence, in order to facilitate the return of sinners to God by the last-mentioned exercises of religion. Most extensive powers are accorded by the Supreme Pontiff to all approved ministers of the sacrament of penance, a principal object of which indulgence is not only to encourage Christians to a closer union with, and a livelier sense of their dependence, in spiritual matters, on the *Supreme Pontiff*, who governs them as Christ's vicar on earth, but principally to induce them, by holding out every possible encouragement to pray to God, and perform works of piety in those places, and under those circumstances, which shall be most acceptable to God, and most conducive to their own spiritual advantage."

Having thus explained the meaning of the words, we next proceed to show what are the benefits stated to result from gaining a plenary indulgence. We cite the same authority before referred to (Indulgences Collected by a Member of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences at Rome, p. x).—"If a person laboured with all his power to make satisfaction, and complied with the requisite conditions, and if he were truly penitent, and so well disposed as to gain the full effects of a plenary indulgence, should he die immediately after, his soul would suffer nothing in purgatory, but would go directly to heaven. The same may be said of the faithful departed. Whenever, in their favour, we fully gain a plenary indulgence, which is applicable to them, the soul to whom the indulgence is especially applied, if it be in purgatory, that moment is liberated from the painful flames, and is received into glory, *provided the Divine justice designs to accept it in her favour.*"

Having thus answered, from authentic Roman Catholic works, the principal questions asked by Mr. Spring (reserving for a future number the rest), we proceed to "add something (as he desires) of the grounds on which Protestants refuse to avail themselves of a provision said to be replete with such wonderful blessings."

Those reasons will ultimately resolve themselves into one or other of the two following—viz., either, 1st, that indulgences are chimerical; or, 2nd, that they are positively injurious.

We intend not to approach this subject in any other spirit than that of candid discussion, to which we invite the best efforts of our respected Roman Catholic correspondents to support those doctrines of their church, and open the eyes of Protestants to their error (if such it be) in resisting the benefits which Roman Catholics believe to result from such indulgences. If Protestants be in error on the point, it is surely the duty of Roman Catholics to *pity* rather than to *unathematize* them; and we can conceive no more imperative duty, on the part of a Christian bishop or priest, than to afford pious and candid Protestants every light in their power to lead them into truth, remembering that, although some men may be inclined to take things for granted, without proof, others cannot do so, and require proof before they can adopt, as true, propositions not in themselves self-evident.

The latter class, when invited to partake of the blessings alleged by Roman Catholics to flow from indulgences, naturally and not unreasonably ask for proof—probable proof, at least, if not positive—that they are not chimerical, but founded in reality.

Now, for a man to arrive at such a result, we think that it will scarcely be denied that the following points ought to be proved or fairly established:—

1st. That God, when he pardons the *guilt* of sin, and releases the sinner from the *eternal* punishment due to it, still leaves the sinner *unpardoned* as to *temporal* or *temporary* punishment, to work out his own pardon, either during life or after death, before he can seek the benefit of the remission of his guilt, and of the eternal punishment due to it.

2nd. That this temporal or temporary punishment can be commuted, or compounded for, by acts not partaking of the nature of punishment or suffering.

3rd. That the acts or supposed merits of one human being can be transferred to another, so as to satisfy the Divine justice in respect of that *punishment* which remains due, after the merits of Christ have blotted out the *guilt* and expiated the *eternal* punishment due to it.

4th. That superfluous merits or satisfactions of Christ and eminent saints are laid up in a celestial treasury, to be laid out for those that want them, to make up the deficiency of their own personal endurance of the temporary or temporal punishment due to those sins whose *guilt* has been forgiven them.

5th. That the Pope has the power of dispensing this treasury either with or without the aid of the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences at Rome, in favour either of the living who comply with the conditions he imposes, or in favour of the faithful dead who are suffering in purgatory this temporal punishment.

Each of these points we propose seriously to discuss in their turn; but as, with the Rev. Mr. Spring, we should rather hear the best Roman Catholic arguments from "a living, speaking tribunal," than subject ourselves to the charge of understating them, we would earnestly solicit the Right Rev. Dr. Keane, or some other able and learned bishop of the Roman Catholic Church, to furnish us with the best proof that exists on the foregoing points, which we shall gladly print in our pages, and treat with all the respect which the importance of the subject and the dignity of his office deserve at our hands. But should he still decline "to explain, with perspicuity, the power of indulgences," neither he nor our Roman Catholic readers will have a right to complain, if we proceed, in our next number, to consider the force of the best reasons we have been able to find, in Roman Catholic controversialist writers, in support of the doctrine and practice in question.

A copy of the Rev. E. Spring's letter, which appeared in our August number, and of this article, has been forwarded, in a respectful letter, to the address of the Right Rev. Dr. Keane, Roman Catholic Bishop of Ross, Skibbereen.

#### WHAT TRADITION TELLS US OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

##### [No. I, THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS.]

IN our last number we laid before our readers all the passages we could find in the New Testament where the Virgin Mary is spoken of. We think it likely that many of our readers were surprised to see how few there were; and that even of these few passages in which her name is mentioned, in the historical part of the New Testament, two seem designed to check any excess of veneration for her, and to point out to Christians that the blessedness which she enjoys is only that which may be shared by any faithful follower of our Lord. "Whosoever shall do the will of my Father that is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Blessed is the womb that bare our Lord; but he has said, "Yea, rather, blessed are they who hear the Word of God and keep it." Very striking, too, is the fact, that not a single mention of the Virgin Mary occurs in any of the letters of the apostles which has been handed down to us.

Now, we do not mean to argue this question on Protestant grounds. A Protestant holds that the providence of God has preserved, in the Holy Scriptures, everything taught by our Lord and his apostles which it is necessary for us to believe or to practise, and that of such teaching there is no other authentic record. When, therefore, he finds that the Scriptures do not say a syllable as to any advantages to be gained by offering our prayers through the mediation of the Virgin, and that, on the other hand, they speak of our Lord as the only mediator, he inquires no farther; for he cannot suppose that, did such a way of access to God exist, the Scriptures would have been silent on a subject so important to our faith and practice. However, as we have said, we are content to examine into this subject on Roman Catholic grounds, and if any good evidence can be produced by *tradition* that our Lord and his apostles recommended their followers to offer their prayers through the Virgin Mary, we are willing to attend to it. It must, of course, be kept in mind, that the value of a tradition constantly diminishes with the number of hands it passes through before being recorded. Thus courts of law will listen to anything a witness says he saw or heard himself, but they will not receive "hearsay evidence," as to what other people told him took place; still less will they receive the hearsay of a hearsay; and even in common conversation we should not yield much belief to a story if we had no better authority for it than that our informant heard it from Mr. A., who was told by Mr. B. that he had heard Mr. C. who had heard somebody else say that such and such a thing took place. So, then, if we are told by any one who lived in the time of the apostles, that they taught any particular doctrine, such a witness is worth being listened to; if we are told so by one who lived 50 or 100 years after their death, the evidence is, of course, of something less value; and when we come to people who lived 500 years after the apostles, we give our readers a very simple test how much their evidence is worth. It is now only 125 years since the death of George I. (not a very

long time to carry a tradition through), and yet, if we had no printed books to tell us what took place in Ireland during his reign, we think that it is little enough we should learn on the subject from the reports of our fathers and grandfathers. Four hundred years ago Henry the Sixth was King of England. If our readers will endeavour to find out how much they can learn with certainty, by tradition alone, of what took place in Ireland in his time, then they will know exactly of what value is a tradition four hundred years old.

Having said this much to enable our readers to judge of the comparative dependence to be placed on the writers whom we shall quote, we proceed to lay before them in order all that we can find in the early Christian writers concerning the Blessed Virgin. And as the number and length of the books which we have to examine increase, it becomes of course more difficult to be certain that we are leaving out nothing. All that we can say is, that we shall *designedly* leave out nothing that is of importance to this question; that we shall assist our own reading by examining the writings of those Roman Catholic divines who have quoted all that they could find in the works of the early Fathers calculated to do honour to the Virgin; and that if, after all, we should omit to insert any such testimony in its proper place, we shall cheerfully insert it, if pointed out to us by our readers.

Before proceeding to uninspired writers, we wish to make some further remarks on the fact, that no mention is made of the Virgin Mary in any of the apostolic epistles. On the grounds which we are now arguing we admit that this silence will not prove demonstratively, that they did not entertain those views of the Blessed Virgin which are held by the Church of Rome; but it will at least show that she did not occupy a very prominent place in their thoughts. If there be any subject which a friend has never mentioned to us, in any conversation we have held with him, we cannot be quite sure that he knows nothing of this subject, but we may conclude, that it is not one that is constantly in his thoughts, or on which he is very anxious that we should be informed. So we can at least see that modern Romanists, "who have the Virgin's name ever on their lips," do not in this respect at all resemble the apostles, who have left us twenty-one epistles without one allusion to her. It would require us to look through a great many pastorals of Romish bishops now-a-days before we could find twenty-one which do not in some place mention the Virgin Mary. Since our last article was published, a pastoral, issued by the present Pope, has appeared in the Dublin papers. When we saw it, we at once looked through it in search of the never-failing paragraph in honour of the Blessed Virgin; and sure enough there it was, in the following terms:—

"And that God may be made more accessible, and give ear to our prayers, let us raise our hearts and hands to his most holy mother, the Immaculate Virgin Mary. We could not find protection more powerful or more effectual with God. She is to us the most tender of mothers; our firmest reliance, and the very spring of our hopes; since she asks nothing which she does not obtain, and her prayer is never refused."

Now, we would ask our readers, did the apostles think the same? And if they did, why did they never mention the Blessed Virgin? We could understand their silence on an unimportant subject; but could they write twenty-one letters without once speaking of the "very spring of their hopes," or once pointing out to their readers where they could find "protection the most powerful and the most effectual with God?"

But perhaps it may be said, although nothing of this kind appears in the *letters* of the apostles, there was much of it in their *conversation*, which has been handed down to us by those who heard them. Well, let us see. We take up the collection of writings, commonly known as "the Apostolic Fathers," and we proceed to examine and report what we can find therein on the subject we are discussing.

The first work in this collection is an epistle ascribed to the Apostle Barnabas, the companion of St. Paul in his travels. We need not here dispute whether or no this letter was really written by Barnabas, because the work is undoubtedly one of high antiquity. *But in it there is not a single mention of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

We have next two epistles purporting to be written by Clement, one of the first bishops of Rome, and supposed to be the same as the Clement mentioned by St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3).—"Clement, my fellow-labourer, whose name is in the book of life." Of these two epistles learned men generally consider the first to be genuine, the second not to have been written by Clement, although an ancient document; but both epistles agree in this, that there is not a syllable in either about the Virgin Mary.

We next come to a collection of epistles by Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who suffered martyrdom about seventy years after our Lord's death. Concerning these epistles there has been much dispute, as it is now generally confessed that much that was, for a long time, passed off as Ignatius's was not, in reality, written by him. And though the majority of learned men agree in accepting what are called "the seven shorter epistles" as genuine, there are others who maintain that some of

\* "Instructions and Devotions for the 40 hours' adoration ordered in the Churches in Dublin, during the Jubilee of 1852, published with approbation of the Most Rev. Dr. Cullen, (Roman Catholic) Archbishop of Dublin." James Duffy, 7, Wellington-quay, Dublin, 1852.